



# SOLIHULL

## UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat  
Communities

### October 2023 Newsletter

*“With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing  
with one another in love.”*

***Ephesians 4: 2***



## **SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

Based in the town centre, Solihull URC seeks to minister and witness to the local community, the wider town and the areas of Olton and Hobs Moat where we have formerly had a worshipping presence.

We share our mission with other Churches and are in partnership with others in the community. We invite you to join us as we seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

**[www.solihullurc.org.uk](http://www.solihullurc.org.uk)**  
**[www.centralsolihullchurches.org.uk](http://www.centralsolihullchurches.org.uk)**

### **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**VACANT - Minister**

**Ian Carnell – Elder (Chair of the Elders, Worship & Prayer)**

**Gordon Laurie - Church Secretary & Elder**

**Liz Amos - Treasurer**

**Linda Faber - Mission Enabler & Lettings Administration**

**Howard Cotes – Elder**

**Bev Hands – Elder (Children’s work)**

**Barrie Jones - Elder (Property, Health & Safety)**

**Elaine Jones - Elder (Administration, Data protection, Catering)**

Areas of special responsibility are listed in brackets.

## OCTOBER 2023 DIARY DATES

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>** – Sunday Worship and Communion led by Ian Carnell – 10am

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Job Club – 10:30am

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Elders Meeting

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>** – English Conversation Café - 10:30am

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>** – Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>** – Saturday Café – 9am

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>** – Sunday Worship (Café style) led by Linda Faber – 10am

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Shout Out for the Girls – 10am

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Job Club – 10:30am

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>** – Dining Out Lunch – 12:30pm

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>** – English Conversation Café - 10:30am

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>** – Churches Together in Central Solihull meeting – 7:30pm at St Helen’s Church

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>** – Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>** – Saturday Café – 9am

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>** – Sunday Worship led by Ian Carnell - 10am

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Job Club – 10:30am

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Soup Lunch – 12:15pm in the Cafe

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>** – English Conversation Café - 10:30am

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** – Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup>** – Saturday Café – 9am

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Sunday Worship (Leprosy Mission service) led by Guy Willcock – 10am

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Job Club – 10:30am

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>** – English Conversation Café - 10:30am

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>** - Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>** – Saturday Café – 9am

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>** – Sunday Worship led by Ann Tempest – 10am

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup>** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup>** – Job Club – 10:30am

### **ROTAS**

Please sign the rotas at the back of church if you can serve in any of the following roles. Thank you to those who have volunteered:

**Sunday Welcome (2 people needed each week)**

**Serving Coffee (2 people needed each week)**

**Providing flowers for the Communion Table**

Please consider if you can learn how to serve in any of these ways for the first time. If you have no previous experience in serving in any of these ways, we would be more than happy to help you.

### **SYNOD REP**

We still do not have a Synod Representative. The purpose of the role is to keep us in touch with what is happening in the wider church, help us to access resources and personnel that we could make use of, and to attend the Synod meetings only a couple of times a year.

Could you take on this role to keep us in touch with the wider church?  
Please speak to Gordon Laurie if you are interested in finding out more.

**Linda Faber**

## **LEPROSY MISSION SERVICE ON SUNDAY 22ND OCTOBER**

Please support this wonderful charity and hear all about their work in many different parts of the world. The service will be led by Guy Willcocks who is the area organiser.

**Janet Ince**

### **HARVEST**

Thank you to all those who were able to join in with our harvest activities and/or for the gifts you contributed to our various projects. Also thank you to Gweno and Gerry for decorating the church for our Sunday service. Those using the building in the week following have enjoyed the flowers too.

Our coffee morning raised enough to buy for farmers, in countries who do not have a reliable harvest: Seeds and tools, two nanny goats, a beehive and we can train a farmer, through Christian Aid. Our Quiz night raised just over £100 towards our two charities for 2023/24 NICE and EducAid Africa. Our food produce and Sunday Harvest cash gifts have gone to Helping Hands Food bank run from Renewal Church.

Thank you all once again for joining in.

“All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, so thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all His love.”

**Linda Faber**

## **ENGLISH CLASSES**

We are launching the English Conversation café for people who want to develop English as a second language on Wednesday 20th September, 10.30am - 11.30am. The sessions will be led by Tim Freeman (from the Job Club) and myself and we are looking for people who will join a rota to chat to those who come along on a given topic of the day.

If you could come to chat with, or maybe even befriend, some of these overseas residents on a monthly, or more frequent basis, I would be glad to hear from you. We will also have some input from Elisa who has some experience of learning, and teaching, English as a foreign language. The classes will only meet during the school term time and will begin in September.

## **CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION**

The Christian Resources Exhibition is a 'trade' show where people with anything and everything to do with church and mission exhibit their wares, to sell stuff or just inform the wider church about what they do. There will be everything from banners to Bibles, heating to seating, puppets to pulpits all with stands. There is a full list of exhibitors of the CRE website. There are going to be about 150 stands included.

This year they are coming to our doorstep, for the first time, to Cranmore Park in Shirley on 8th and 9th of November 2023. The Elders are going on the 8th so if anyone else wants to go you need to buy your ticket online, £4 in advance, or tickets are £8 on the door.

**Linda Faber**

## **DINING OUT LUNCH**

Come and enjoy a leisurely lunch and a chat in our café style restaurant

on

10<sup>th</sup> October at 12.30 pm

£4.00

ALL ARE WELCOME

### **MENU**

Fish and Chips

Peas

Bread and Butter

.....

Bakewell Tart and Custard

.....

Tea or Coffee



Please book by contacting Elaine 0121 744 6067 or email

[vej46@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vej46@yahoo.co.uk)

**By Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

## SOUP LUNCH

Come and join us for a

SOUP LUNCH

on 16<sup>th</sup> October  
in the Church café  
at 12.15pm



ALL ARE WELCOME

In aid of the church charities

£3

Church charities are Educaid Africa and N.I.C.E





## TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF CHURCH GROWTH

Continuing through the book 'Towards a theology of Church growth' this month we look at chapter 6 titled 'Incarnation and church growth' by Martin Warner. I will share a few paragraphs that caught my attention and some questions about how we might think about, and use, what we read.

*"In today's culture, driven by consumerism and the market economy, if you are not attracting the numbers, it's likely that you are not connecting with the market. Here is a serious challenge for all Christians. We are not being realistic, or faithful, if we simply seek to live in a bubble that is self-defined and deluded, talking to ourselves about our faith, and failing to connect with anyone else."*

**QUESTION FOR SOLIHULL URC: Are we connecting with those outside the church well enough? How could we be more effective?**

"Four convictions which are foundational to the topic of Incarnation and church growth:

First, church growth is always about Jesus. He is our constant point of reference. He is, uniquely, the way to the Father, the one to whom the Spirit leads, the revelation of our true identity. He is our life; our 'merciful redeemer, friend, and brother'.

Second, I wish to assert that, for the Church today, numbers do matter. If we close our minds to the pressing issue of attracting new people into the company of believing Christians, we have failed the Lord we serve. Jesus still invites us to 'make disciples of all nations'.

Third, I want to be clear that concern about numbers must not be driven by a desire for power – 'success' in the terms of this world and its commercial criteria. Our concern about numbers must be driven by

love in all its divine, eternal, triune fullness and beauty. That is the only motivation for the Mission of God. 'God so loved the world' is a statement of worship, adoration, and the mandate for Christian service. It must always be that, not a health warning to out detractors and those not yet in our pews. God desires 'not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live'.

Fourth, I believe that Christianity is the best outworking there is of human life and love within creation."

**QUESTION FOR SOLIHULL URC: What thoughts and practical ideas come to mind when you read these 4 convictions?**

**Linda Faber**

### **FUNDRAISING APPEAL**

I'm running the 2023 NICE 10k race on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November, taking place in Cannon Hill Park.

For those who aren't aware, NICE (National Institute of Conductive Education) are a charity based in Moseley providing a range of flexible services, such as physical therapy, to adults and children with movement disorders. Harry, our eldest, has attended services at NICE since 2020, and has benefitted greatly.

NICE organize an annual 10k race every year, and I'm taking part to help support the charity with their work. If you would like to make a donation towards their work, please let me know either in-person, or call or email me. My details are at the end of the newsletter. Thank you.

**Stuart Mills**

## **SOLIHULL TREE WARDENS – MEET THE CHAIR**

Ian Mills is a volunteer Tree Warden for Solihull and Chair of the group. As autumn often shows trees in their best colours, we asked Ian about his work.

### **How did you become a Tree Warden Ian, and what does the role entail?**

Fate: My Elderly in-laws lived within a close community in Yardley Wood, Birmingham. Within their neighbourhood there was an Ash tree. A focal point in the vicinity that supported a lot of the areas eco system. I.E. Birds, squirrels, etc. One resident, because of the tree's leaf fall that happened to go into his garden, succeeded in getting the tree felled. Thus, from that moment on there was a large decline in the number of birds etc. that visited the residents' gardens. Felling that tree caused a lot of resentment and from that time on a slow social decline began in that area.

Soon afterwards I read an article (Fate had it that the article's author had the same name as mine: Ian Mills), that said Solihull council was asking for volunteers to start and introduce a National Tree Council Tree Warden scheme, for people to be aware of and encourage others to look after and "warden" Solihull's Trees.

With what happened to the Ash tree and the "upset and environmental loss" it caused afterwards and with the saying, that **"You don't know what you've got until it's gone"**, I decided to be a Warden to "stand up" for my local trees and to try to encourage others to appreciate how much trees are needed in our communities.

Presently the Wardens are carrying out Tree identification walks with the public around the different park spaces of Solihull, sharing their Tree Wardens knowledge with others.

## **Why are trees so important in our environment?**

Apart from supporting wildlife, they help remove carbon from the atmosphere. Trees can produce a wellbeing feeling into an urban environment.

## **Do you have a favourite tree and if so, what is it that appeals to you?**

Wellingtonia/Giant Sequoia, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*. Its height and size, its soft bark and its history. It was named after the Cherokee Indian **Sequoyah**, who created a syllabary so that the Cherokees could write their own language. "He stood tall and led the way".

## **Here in Solihull, and across other parts of the West Midlands and Warwickshire, were part of the original "Forest of Arden". How do you think that legacy has affected our trees?**

I think over time The Forest of Arden has been eroded away for housing etc, and to someone one in the suburbs it is only a place on an old map. More is needed to re-establish the forest before it is confined to the history books.

## **If anyone would like to find out more or perhaps volunteer to be a Tree Warden. what should they do?**

Contact the group via email: [solihulltreewardens@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:solihulltreewardens@yahoo.co.uk)

**Solihull Tree Wardens**

## COACH TRIPPERS UNITED 2023 ITINERARY

OCTOBER 19TH Oxford



Pick up point West Warwick Sport & Social Club, Grange Road, Solihull at 8:30am.

The cost will be £25 including car parking and driver tip plus entrance fees where appropriate in cash.

To book contact David Argall on [davidargall185@btinternet.com](mailto:davidargall185@btinternet.com) or 0121 704 4006.

**Anne Cherry**

## **CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES**

You might remember that last year we put in the newsletter each month a suggested item to buy for the Christmas shoebox appeal. This was so people didn't have to buy many things all at once in the autumn. Similarly, I have put the list, with a collection box, in the Central Foyer (Nattery) so that people can make contributions all through the year if they want to. Please consider putting together a whole box of your own (leaflets are available now) or contribute through this community box if you want to spread your giving.

**Linda Faber**

## **SHOE BOXES**

I have put out this year's leaflets in case people want to start collecting things when they see them. This spreads the expense and avoids a last-minute rush. The charity is hoping to make a special effort this year because of the hardship Ukraine and other countries are experiencing.

If you haven't done a shoebox before, the leaflet explains clearly how to do it. If you want to know more, please see me. Thank you in anticipation.

**Anne Cherry**

## **ADVANCED NOTICE**

2024 holds the 10th anniversary of Solihull URC forming from the three churches at Hobs Moat, Olton and Central Solihull. We are going to hold a special service on Sunday 17th March 2024. Please write the date in your diaries and come and celebrate the occasion with us if you can.

Looking further ahead, 2025 is the 200th anniversary of the formation of the nonconformist church of which we are the present-day congregation. Many changes, and ups & downs, have happened over those two centuries but we are still here! I want to make a whole year of celebrations but we will be holding a full weekend of activities on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd November 2025. Please avoid booking your holidays that weekend if you can, as we would like to have as many join in as possible.

If you would like to join a group thinking up ideas, and organising activities, for those bicentenary celebrations please speak to me. I am already putting into place some plans.

**Linda Faber**

## KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

### Minister

VACANT

### Church Secretary

Mr. Gordon Laurie – 07500 902593 – [gordonjlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:gordonjlaurie@gmail.com)

### Church Phone Number

0121 709 5505

### Website

[www.solihullurc.org.uk](http://www.solihullurc.org.uk)

**Hall Lettings:** 0121 709 5505

**Safeguarding:** Melanie Tillman - 07511 084840

**Generations Project** - enabling the Church in care homes

[www.generationssolihull.org.uk](http://www.generationssolihull.org.uk) [generationssolihull@icloud.com](mailto:generationssolihull@icloud.com)

### Zoom Details

Meeting ID: 865 7763 7936

Passcode: 986653

## NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Material for the November 2023 edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

[stuartkmills@gmail.com](mailto:stuartkmills@gmail.com)

by Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October please.